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WORK IN COMBATING PLANT DEFICIENCY DISEASES PROGRESSES

An all-Union conference was summoned by the Academy of Sciences USSR, and the Academy of Agricultural Sciences imeni V. I. Lenin on 15 March. The meeting lasted 5 days and during its course about 40 speeches were heard.

The chairman of the organizational committee of the conference, A. P. Vinogradov, Corresponding Member of the Academy of Sciences USSR, reported the following information to the Moskovskaya Pravda correspondent:

'The term "microcell" is at present applied to all chemical elements which are found in the soil, in water, and in very small quantities of living organisms. Until now, it was thought that only ten chemical elements were utilized by animals and plants in their daily lives: carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, phosphorus, and several others. Some scholars consider the presence of other microcells in plant and animal organisms to be a sign of impurity.

'Soviet research workers have determined that all chemical elements known in Mendeleyev's Periodic Table are to be found in plant and animal organisms. The lack or excess of chemical elements causes illness in animals or destroys their fertility. For example, the lack of iodine in an organism causes Basedow's disease. It is possible to combat all such diseases of animals or plants by injecting the corresponding microcells into the food or soil. Peat soil is particularly poor in copper. Animals feeding only on plants growing in soil lacking copper become ill. Therefore, peat soil needs copper fertilizers.

'Application of copper fertilizers to peat soils, soaking seeds in copper sulfate solution, and sprinkling the first leaves of plants with copper sulfate solution aid in raising the size of the harvest.

'In sandy and in peaty soil areas of Latvian SSR, a certain disease has long been observed among cattle, sheep, and goats -- the so-called marasmus. The cause of this disease and the means of treating it were not known to veterinarians. Experiments made by Soviet scientists showed, however, that the animals recovered after receiving 15 kilograms of cobalt.'

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